

REMARKS

Claims 29-38, 62-66 and 71-73 are pending. Claims 18, 20-28 and 67-70 have been canceled to place the application in condition for allowance. Claims 29 and 30 have been amended to include all of the features of previous independent claim 18 to overcome the objection to these claims. Dependent claims 62-66 have been amended to depend from claim 30, and claim 63 has been amended also to correct an antecedent basis problem. Furthermore, the specification has been amended to update the reference to copending patent applications that have subsequently issued. No new matter is introduced.

Claims 33-38 and 71-73 have been allowed, and claims 29-32 have been found allowable. In view of the amendment of claims 29 and 30 into independent form, all of the pending claims are presently allowed, and all of the rejections of the final Office Action are presently moot.

Rejection Over Thaler in view of Whitney et al. and Allen

The Examiner rejected claims 18, 20, 22-28, 62, and 64 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,547,716 to Thaler (Thaler) in view of U.S. Patent 5,043,548 to Whitney et al. (Whitney) and further in view of Allen et al., J. Vac. Sci. Technol., 16(2), Mar/Apr 1979 (Allen). Since all of these claims have been canceled, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 18, 20, 22-28, 62, and 64 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thaler in view of Whitney and further in view of Allen.

Rejection Over Thaler, Whitney et al., Allen et al. and Rao et al.

The Examiner rejected claims 21, 63 and 65-70 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thaler, Whitney and Allen as applied above and further in view of U.S. Patent

5,874,134 to Rao et al. (Rao). Since all of these claims have been canceled, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claims 21, 38, 63 and 65-70 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Thaler, Whitney and Allen in view of Rao.

CONCLUSIONS

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if the Examiner believes it would be useful to advance prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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